

DR. CHARLES BILLINGSLEA HOUSE

109 EAST MAIN STREET

The house Dr. Charles Billingslea built for himself around 1860 is one of the most "open" in the City, as it throws its verandaed, bulging sides out to the light to the south and the east. Extremely irregular in shape, very large, yet still light and airy, it manages to create a "Clarence Day" feeling of light-hearted prosperity. That the building's architect achieved this effect is a high testament to his skill, as he seems to have had but a few techniques, yet these are enough to make the difference, to set no. 109 clearly beyond its contemporaries. Most obviously, the lightness is aided by the trim of delicate barge-boards, by the bays' cornices, and by the east and south porches' railings. Also, and again superficially, the rise that the house sits on serves to physically elevate the house. But the "aesthetic elevation" is, perhaps, most importantly, a result of intrinsic unity. For example, a series of diagonal lines can be seen stretching across the south facade. These lines drawn from the gable's barge-board to the exact eastern tip of the porch, from the western end of the gable to the eastern end of the porch exactly through the center of the door's porch, serve to unify the south facade, and cannot be accidental; nor can the horizontal line from the bay's cornice to the porch's cornice. Unity among, not only within, facades also exists - the east and south facades are linked by the opposite-placed gables (if a line were drawn between the gables it would bisect the house); ironically, gables work in a reverse way for the west and north facades (where they are placed edge to edge to help turn the northwest corner.)

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Dr. Charles Billingslea Residence

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

109 East Main Street (MD 32)

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Carroll

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES RESTRICTED☐ YES UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Alvie G. Spencer, Jr.

Telephone #: 848-3393

STREET & NUMBER

27 Smith Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21157

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 594

Folio #: 533

STREET & NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR
☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Charles Billingslea House faces east and south towards Main Street, about 80' west of that street's intersection with Lincoln Road in Westminster. Billingslea took a normal L-shape, with the bay towards the street, and added another extension off the section parallel with the street, as in a telescope.

From Main Street, the house reveals this L-shape, a shape not unusual for the time or City, with a three-story cross section perpendicular to Main Street, and with a bulge off the eastern end of the section parallel with that artery. The first 2 stories of the cross section are a hexagonal bay window; each of the bay's three exposed sides has, on each floor, one double-hung sash window with two-over-two panes. The bay is topped by a cornice completely enriched by modillions; the flat roof of the bay is railed in by a latticed balcony. Above the bay is a pair of 2/2 windows below a full, bracketed entablature. The gable above this section has bargeboards gouged in a delicate pattern reminiscent of the "Pennsylvania Dutch".

To the east, the solid 4-panel double door is emphasized by a small flat-roofed porch, which is reached by a flight of 10 steps. The entablature of the porch's roof is on line with that of the bay's and thus creates a rare linking horizontal line in the house. Above, on the second floor, is a 2/2 black-shuttered window.

A similar 2/2 window is on the south side of the southern end of the 2 bulges that create the building's east facade. The rest of this bulge has a continuation of the bargeboards above three randomly placed windows - a 1/1 window on the top floor with a 2/2 window to the north of the ground floor; a green shuttered-over window is below the 1/1 window. To the north is a section about the same size as the Main Street bay window; this extends out towards the east and has its ground floor en-wrapped by a 3-sided shed-roofed porch with a railing similar to that on top of the Main Street bay's. Above the porch, is a 3-sided bay, similar to Main Street's even down to the 2/2 windows and the cornice. (One difference is that here the windows are flanked by elongated black louvered shutters.) Above the cornice, within the barge-boarded gable, is a 1/1 simply-enframed window.

The north and west fronts have less movement. The west front is particularly plain and quiet. Laid in 6 course common bond (as is the entire building), the house's low coursed fieldstone foundation can be seen as the wall stretches to the north, 5 bays deep. The eaves continue the decorated board decoration, but otherwise, except for an unadorned gable to the north, there is nothing but the regular solid-void pattern to create any sort of rhythm. Second and third floors have five 2/2 windows each, all with green louvered shutters, white wooden sills and four course gauged flat arches. The ground floor has 6 bays in the pattern, from the south, DWWDD. All

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW		
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1880

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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Unity among, not only within, facades also exists - the east and south facades are linked by the opposite-placed gables (if a line were drawn between the gables it would bisect the house); ironically, gables work in a reverse way for the west and north facades (where they are placed edge to edge to help turn the northwest corner).

Charles Billingslea acquired the 50' x 198' lot from James Billingslea on December 4, 1875 for \$1000, Carroll County Deed Book 46, Page 24; it took him a while to build the house, as the 1887 City plat did not show the house. "However, by 1887 the City Directory not only listed the place as his residence, it included a full-page engraving of it in the section on the town's "Prominent Buildings", one of 5 houses to be so honored. To help insulate his house from its neighbors, Billingslea bought 2 additional strips of land one 7' x 198' to the east (from the Union National Bank) for \$300 on September 4, 1884 (61/210), and one, 10' x 198', to the west (from William B. Thomas on October 1, 1913 (123/503). Billingslea's will, no. 12/190, dated July 15, 1918, appointed his son, Charles Smith Billingslea, as executor; the son sold his father's house to Alvie

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Being all of lot 29, and the easterly 10 feet of lot 28 of the town of New London, later incorporated into Westminster.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Christopher Weeks, Consultant

December, 1976

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Westminster

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

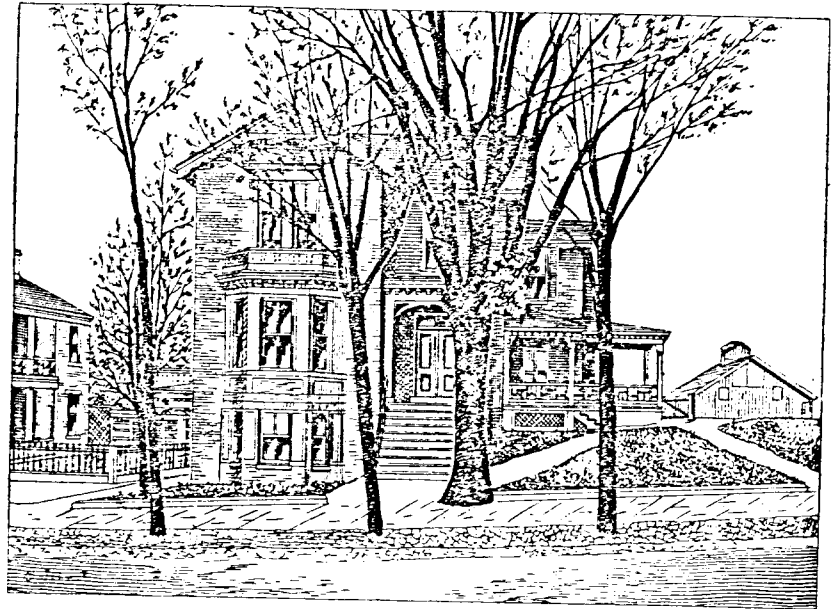
RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

#7

vertically aligned with those on the second and third floors (the northernmost W-D combination attempts this by each having one half of the space). Doors all have 6 panels. The north front is $2\frac{1}{2}$ floors tall, with, as a skyline, a gable to the west, and a broad corbel-capped chimney to the east. A two-tiered wooden porch is strung across this wall, sheltering a 6-panel door with two $2/2$ windows to its west on the ground floor, and a single-light casement window between two 6-panel doors on the second floor. The gable room has a round arched, narrow, $1/1$ window. To the north of the building is its only remaining out building. (An engraving in the 1887 City Directory shows the house as having a near pastoral setting complete with barn.) The pink brick building is laid in common bond, with a central $2/2$ second story window above a 4-panel door on the east front, and a second floor tinned-over door to the north, windows and doors have 4-course gauged flat arches. A westward sloping tin roof covers this building.

#8

G. Spencer for \$11,750 on January 9, 1945 (185/473). Spencer sold the place to his son 30 years later - April 30, 1975, deed 594/533. Thus, in over a century, only two families have owned the house.



RESIDENCE OF DR. CHARLES BILLINGSLEA.

611

From the 1887 City Directory



CARR 399

109 E Main St.

Westville

S. Jacinto

C. Carr 12/76

48°/0



48%

B-4

CARR 399

109 E. Main St.
Westminster

W. J. J. J.
C. J. J. J. 12/74



CARR 399

109 E. Main St.

Westminster

S. facade detail

C. Weich 12/76



CARR 379

109 E. MAIN ST.

WESTMINSTER

N. J. 1000

1/77 Church



CARA 389

109 E. MAIN ST.

WESTMINSTER.

1 car depending
(2. family)

6/20/77